



# Cross Country Canada Ski de fond Canada

Canada's Cross-Country Skiing Community • La communauté canadienne du ski de fond

## Para-Nordic Update for 2011/12

---

### **Para-Nordic - General**

#### **Introduction**

Last year was a time of transition and change for the CCC Para-Nordic program with funding instability and staff changes and new initiatives being undertaken at the same time. This 2011/12 year will see stabilization in funding and staffing and a renewed focus on developing and supporting Para-Nordic programming in Canada.

#### **Staffing**

Mike Edwards was hired as the full-time Assistant Director of High Performance - Para-Nordic (ADHP-PN) in January 2011 and he is looking forward to completing his first year with CCC. As part of CCC's High Performance team Mike is accountable for leading the ongoing development and delivery of high performance and development programs for Para-Nordic athletes with the ultimate goal of delivering sustainable podium performances at Paralympic Games. You can reach Mike by email [medwards@cccski.com](mailto:medwards@cccski.com) or phone 403-679-6791 Ext 35.

Nadia Smith has now completed a full year as CCC's Para-Nordic Development Coordinator and will be continuing in that role. Nadia contributes to the planning and implementation of CCC's Para-Nordic development programs as well as providing overall Para-Nordic program planning and administrative support. You can reach Nadia by email [nsmith@cccski.com](mailto:nsmith@cccski.com) or phone 403-679-6791 Ext. 34.

Mike and Nadia are working out of CCC's office in Canmore and together are providing the stable leadership needed to develop a successful Para-Nordic program into the future.

#### **New Para-Nordic Operational Committee**

To provide overall direction for CCC's Para-Nordic programs CCC has decided to form a dedicated Para-Nordic Operational Committee. The CCC Board of Directors has approved the 'terms of reference' for the new committee and it will start to meet and make Para-Nordic related decisions in the fall of 2011. This new committee will have a broad focus to offer support and advice for all CCC Para-Nordic programs as well as provide a communication conduit to the divisions and clubs across Canada for Para-Nordic issues. The committee replaces the Para-Nordic Development Committee which was a sub-committee of the CAD Committee and looked only at development issues. The new Operational Committee will continue to have a development focus while providing the strategic linkage between grass-roots development and high performance racing as well as growing CCC's overall Para-Nordic programs in a broader mandate. The new Operational Committee will have many of the same people on it that have been on the Para-Nordic Development Committee. It is intended that the committee members will continue to provide assistance and direction to clubs and individuals regarding Para-Nordic issues and act as a liaison between CCC and the Para-Nordic community.

## **Para-Nordic - High Performance**

### **Funding**

CCC's Para-Nordic program funding relies upon Sport Canada to provide the funding base and Own the Podium (OTP) to provide funds focused more on high performance programs. In the post Paralympic 2010/11 season OTP funding was drastically cut and the high performance programs faced some real challenges. This year, due to CCC's renewed commitment to Para-Nordic programming and staffing, OTP funding has been restored to a level which is sustainable in the long term and allows CCC to provide support for its high performance programs from grass-roots to the Para-Nordic National Ski Team (PNST).

### **International Objectives for 2011/12**

Despite the funding challenges in 2010/11 the team had several successes which we hope to build upon this coming season. Mark Arendz made a breakthrough in biathlon medaling six times at World Cups and the PNST earned an impressive seven World Championships medals.

In this non-Paralympic and non-World Championship year the team will be setting its sights on International Paralympic Committee (IPC) World Cup competitions with a focus on the World Cup Finals in Finland. The team's goal is to achieve 15 World Cup medals and have athletes contending for top three overall World Cup placings. The ultimate goal is always to build towards the 2014 Paralympics in Sochi Russia.

As a part of its high performance development strategy CCC will be opening up the selection process to allow several development level athletes to attend the IPC World Cup events scheduled in the mid-western United States this season. The goal is to provide development level athletes more international experience and the opportunity to meet PNST selection criteria standards.

For a full calendar of events please go to the Events Calendar page on CCC's new website. <http://www.cccski.com/Events/Events-Calendar.aspx>

### **Para-Nordic National Ski Team (PNST) Coaches**

*Robin McKeever:* Robin assumed the PNST head coach position last season after four years as technical coach and as a Paralympic multi-medalist guide with his brother Brian McKeever. Robin will be continuing as head coach but due to injury and the continued evolution of his head coach role Robin is not currently guiding. Erik Carleton has been recruited as Brian's new guide.

*Kaspar Wirz:* With Robin taking over the reigns as head coach Kaspar is moving into a new role as the biathlon coach on contract. His vast event experience will also be used to help organize the team while at major events.

### **Para-Nordic Athletes**

*PNST World Cup Team* – Mark Arendz, Colette Bourgonje, Erik Carleton (guide), Chris Klebl, Brain McKeever,

*PNST Development Team* – Sebastien Fortier

For more information about the PNST World Cup and Development teams please go to the PNST page on CCC's new website. <http://www.cccski.com/Para-Nordic/Events/Para-Nordic-CPL.aspx>

*On the Horizon* – CCC will continue to work closely with the Divisions to help develop athletes at the club and division level. In addition CCC is working to encourage and develop targeted 'developing' athletes by providing funding to give them opportunities to learn from and train with PNST athletes

and coaches. The hope is that these athletes may be inspired by this experience to take their training and development to the next level. Two athletes were given this opportunity in 2011 and it is planned to do this for others moving forward. The 2011 Canada Winter Games was an important development tool for identifying some of these potential high performance athletes.

### **High Performance Strategic Direction and initiatives**

Currently Para-Nordic strategies and goals are dispersed in various CCC program planning documents and a more focused approach to Para-Nordic is needed. The Para-Nordic High Performance program will undertake a strategic review this year to develop comprehensive Para-Nordic specific high performance operational and campaign plans which integrate with CCC's overall high performance and development plans.

### **Para-Nordic Canadian Point List (PN-CPL)**

At the start of the 2010/11 season CCC had the goal of providing the Para-Nordic community with a national points ranking system similar to that for able-bodied competitors. We are now pleased to say that this was a successful pilot project and the first 'year-end' PN-CPL has now been published.

While we started the year with only 14 reference skiers to determine values of domestic races to start the 2010/11 season, our first PN-CPL now provides 33 reference skiers to determine race values in 2011/12. Those 33 reference skiers (out of 42 licensed skiers) earned points throughout the 2010/11 season in at least three races attended by one or more reference skiers in their categories.

The PN CPL system is not yet a fully reliable and representative system but this first year was a great step forward. The project will continue for 2011/12 and with more reference skiers and increasing participation the system's reliability and accuracy can only improve. Hopefully it will soon get to a stage where the PN-CPL is reliable enough to be used in selection processes. For more detailed information please go to our Para-Nordic-CPL page on CCC's new website.

<http://www.ccski.com/Para-Nordic/Events/Para-Nordic-CPL.aspx>

## **Para-Nordic - Development**

### **Para-Nordic development program funding to continue in 2011/12**

In 2010/11 the CCC Para-Nordic Division Funding Program was a big success and will be continuing in 2011/12. This CCC initiative, in support of the recruitment and development of individuals with a disability, is designed to enhance Para-Nordic grass-roots programs leading to a stronger competitive base in Canada. It is funded through Sport Canada who have allocated funds to help CCC promote and deliver programming to people with a disability (PWAD) at the early levels of performance development.

Funding will be awarded to divisions who submit proposals that best meet the goals of the program and in consideration of total funding available (\$30,000), geographic representation and the number of participants likely to be affected by the initiatives. Maximum funding awarded per division will not exceed \$10,000 and cannot represent more than 50% of the proposed projects total costs.

The application deadline is October 17<sup>th</sup> 2011. For more information on those funding programs and to download the application form, please go to the Para-Nordic Funding page on CCC's new website.

<http://www.ccski.com/Para-Nordic/Funding-Sources.aspx>

### **Outreach Camps**

At the 2011 Canada Winter Games, CCC, a number of coaches and athletes met and discussed the benefits of working cooperatively on two regional development level outreach camps which would include the participation of some PNST athletes and coaches. Plans are now underway to hold these

camps in the fall of 2011 - one in the East at Mt. St-Anne and one in the West in Canmore. For more details please go to the Para-Nordic Camps and Clinics page on CCC's new website.

<http://www.cccski.com/Para-Nordic/Events/Clinics---Camps.aspx>

### **Canada Winter Games**

The Canada Winter Games (CWG) in 2011 saw the successful integration of Para-Nordic skiers from various divisions into the CWG schedule. Thirty athletes participated which allowed for meaningful competitions in most categories. CCC is now lobbying the Canada Games Council to open up the competition to more athletes with larger quotas from each province. It is hope that the CWG will provide a competitive focus for provinces and can be used as a development and recruitment tool by clubs, divisions and ultimately CCC.

### **Classification Update**

Classification remains an issue for CCC as there are currently no medical classifiers and only one technical classifier in Canada. Part of the reason for this is that the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) - who governs international classification and certifies all classifiers - has been in transition itself. The IPC is revising their system of Para-Nordic classification. This has put classification initiatives on hold in most countries. CCC's goal this year is to come up with a comprehensive long term written classification plan that can dovetail with the new IPC system which is due to be completed by the fall of 2012. It is also planned certify up to three new medical classifiers at an IPC classification seminar at the IPC World Cups in the USA this season. For more detailed information please go to the Classification page on CCC's new website.

<http://www.cccski.com/Para-Nordic/About-Para-Nordic/Classification.aspx>

### **Talent ID and Recruitment Planning**

Talent identification, recruitment and development are issues across all Para-sport. The international Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the Canadian Paralympic Committee (CPC) are currently working on talent ID, recruitment and development initiatives and strategies to make sure that there are sufficient numbers of athletes involved in Para-sport to create meaningful competitions and value to Para-athletes in the long term. It is CCC's goal this year to develop a long term strategic plan for Talent ID, recruitment and development for Para-Nordic skiing to help ensure the long term viability of Para-Nordic sport.